



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ

The Newsletter of the Multi-National Force - Iraq

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Photo courtesy of Australian MOD

Australian Army Pvt. Clinton Nunn scans the horizon from a guard tower in Muthanna province in southern Iraq. Security responsibility for the province will soon be handed over to Iraqi security forces.

Official: Muthanna ready

Province responsible for its own security next week

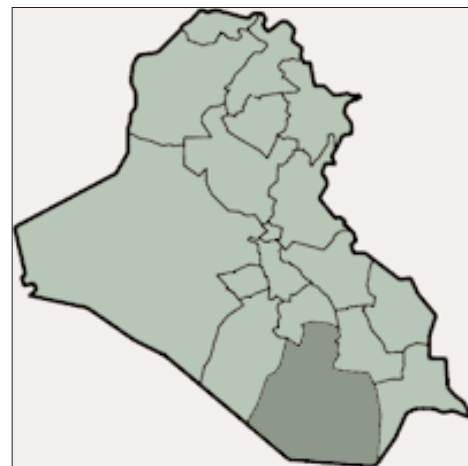
By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Coalition troops operating in Iraq's Muthanna province will soon transfer security responsibilities to Iraqi police, a Multi-National Force - Iraq leader said Friday in Baghdad.

When Coalition forces leave Muthanna sometime next week, the province will become the first of Iraq's 18 provinces to be responsible for its own security, Brig. Gen. Kurt A. Cichowski, MNF-I's deputy chief of staff for strategy, plans and assessment, told Pentagon reporters during a video teleconference.

Yet, the transfer of security doesn't have any bearing on the numbers of U.S. and Coalition troops, Cichowski said. About 127,000 U.S. troops are in Iraq.

"It's important to understand that troop



reductions and the transfer of Iraqi security control are mutually exclusive," the general said. "While they are related in the end, the security-force transfer is the

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GENERAL CASEY'S CORNER

I had the great honor of administering the Oath of Citizenship to 76 of our nation's finest young men and women last week.

These young Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines represent the best of our nation. America was built through the strong will and determination of immigrants from the Mayflower to the modern day, but those who became citizens at Camp Victory last Tuesday are even more special.

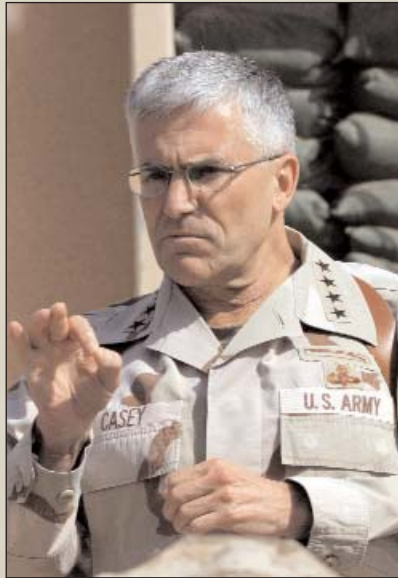
Thousands of men and women in uniform were born in other countries and now spend each day in honorable service to their adopted land. These men and women love our country and have embraced the values we hold so dear. They show it daily with their courage and devotion to duty.

Even before they earned the full rights of U.S. citizenship, they demonstrated their willingness to risk their lives for freedom.

Our friends and allies here in Iraq share our love of liberty and democracy and are also willing to brave danger for freedom.

The day before we welcomed our service-members as new citi-

By Gen. George W. Casey Jr.
Multi-National Force - Iraq



"Our friends and allies here in Iraq share our love of liberty and democracy and are also willing to brave danger ..."

zens, some of Iraq's best young Soldiers celebrated a step forward too.

The 5th Iraqi Army Division assumed military operations in northern Iraq's Diyala Province from Task Force Band of Brothers during a transfer of authority ceremony at the Kirkush Military Training Base.

Iraqi security forces are becoming more and more capable of conducting both independent and combined operations. Last month, 90 percent of all operations at company-level or below were independent or com-

bined.

While Iraqi security forces are now often in the lead, it doesn't mean that they are on their own.

They still require Coalition support, but we will decrease that support as they grow in numbers and capability. Task Force Band of Brothers troops will remain in the area, providing support to the 5th Iraqi Division.

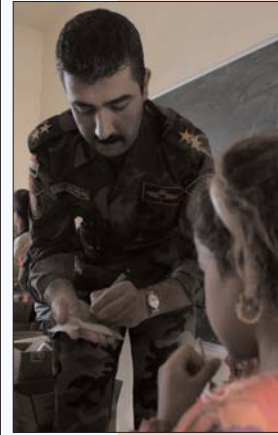
But later this month you will witness the first Iraqi province to take complete security responsibility. Multi-National Force - Iraq will turn over full security responsibility for the province of Muthanna to the Iraqi government.

This is a huge success for the Iraqi government and security forces. The transfer of security responsibility in Muthanna province is a tangible beginning to a new phase in the history of Iraq that supports their transition to self reliance.

Great strides have been made in bringing freedom and democracy to Iraq, but much work remains to be done.

Courage will be required in the weeks and months ahead to bring the work of the last two-years of Iraqi sovereignty to complete fruition.

Unity, Security, Prosperity



An Iraqi Soldier writes a prescription sheet for a child during a medical exercise with U.S. Navy corpsmen from Regimental Combat Team 5 at a schoolhouse in Fallujah on June 29.



An Iraqi Soldier from the 1st Brigade provides security during Operation Sand Storm on June 26.



Sheik Luis Fandi Muhammed Salih Al-Obeidi, mayor of Rashad in At Tamim province, in northern Iraq, pays a clean up contractor on June 29.

GENERAL CASEY'S CORNER

Iraq winning war on flying crop killers

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone
138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Supporting graphics courtesy of University of Vermont

DAHUK — The Sunn pest is an ancient enemy of Iraqi farmers, but thanks to a crop spraying partnership between the Iraqi government and Coalition forces the quality of this year's Dahuk wheat crop is looking 80 percent better than last year.

"I found out from government officials in the Dahuk region that crop-spraying had not been done in the area for years and that there was no formative way to get it done," said Navy Lt. Kim DaCosta of the 403rd Civil Affairs Battalion.

The Sunn pest was feasting on wheat leaves, stems and grains unhindered.

According to University of Vermont research (www.uvm.edu/~entlab/sunnpest/index.html), the Sunn pest reduces crop yield by about 20 to 30 percent for barley and 50 to 90 percent for wheat.

Perhaps more insidious, the pest also injects chemicals into the wheat that greatly reduces its quality.

So, even if the wheat can be harvested, farmers may have wasted their labor because the wheat can't be used. The bread from such wheat won't rise.

Coalition forces and Iraqi government

authorities teamed up to stop the insects before they ruined this year's crop.

"The Dahuk province needed about (40,000 gallons) of pesticide spray to cover the entire wheat-growing area. Dahuk only had about (16,000 gallons)," DaCosta said.

The Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture agreed to fill the shortfall.

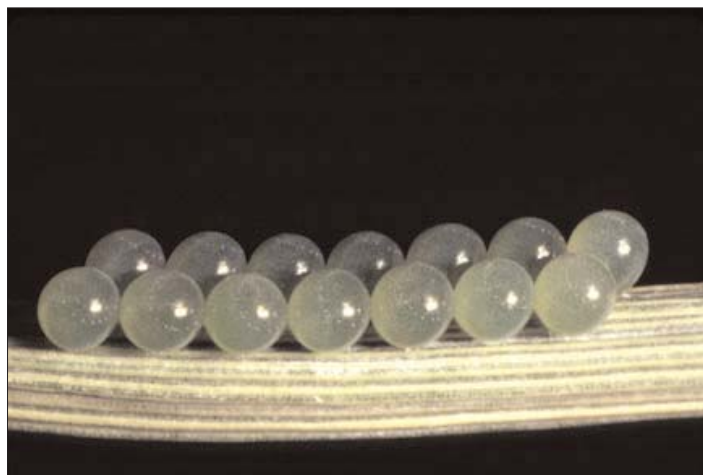
Coalition officials, in conjunction with the ministry, then hired Skylink, a Bulgarian crop-dusting company, to spray farmland in the province.

The Iraqi Directorate General of Agriculture provided grid coordinates for the wheat fields.

DaCosta served as the aviation liaison officer and civil affairs representative for the project.

Last month, farmers began harvesting the wheat.

The crop yield appears greater than last year and, perhaps more importantly, the quality of the wheat is far greater.



Sunn Pest eggs lay neatly arranged on a strand of vegetation.

While the harvest is not complete, the grain quality so far is 80 percent better than last year, DaCosta said.

There are three wheat-quality categories, said the Nashville, Tenn.-native. The first is very marketable. The second degree is still marketable for human consumption, but not to the same degree as the top quality wheat. The third is animal feed.

"Most of this year's crop is between one and two."

Perhaps more important: the farmers of Dahuk learned to help themselves.

"The people of Dahuk were involved," DaCosta said.

"We are looking for them to be completely self-sufficient next year."



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Ken Bergmann

An Mi-2 Hoplite helicopter sprays date palms with pesticides near Forward Operating Base Warhorse on May 20. A similar spraying project on the Dahuk wheat crop increased the quality of the wheat by 80 percent.

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taking over of the policing functions within the province," and has no relation to the level of military forces in Iraq.

Nonetheless, "the transfer of security responsibility clearly demonstrates an Iraqi success and signifies a tangible beginning of a brand-new phase in the history of this nation."

On June 19, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki announced that all Japanese, British and Australian troops deployed within Muthanna province would be withdrawn.

The 600-member Japanese contingent began redeploying Friday.

The turnover was effected by assessments made by the Coalition ground commander and the provincial governor, as well as input from a decision-making body called the Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility.

Cichowski and Iraq's deputy national security adviser are co-chairmen on the commit-



Brig. Gen Kurt A. Cichowski

tee.

The JCTSR uses a four-point assessment formula to gauge whether provincial police are up to the job of providing security.

They assess:

- o The existing threat level within a province,
- o The status of Iraqi security forces within a province, particularly its police;
- o The relationship between multinational and Iraqi security forces in the province, and;
- o The overall ability of the province to govern itself.

The Iraqi prime minister has final say whether or not a province can provide its own security, the general said.

"Muthanna had met the agreed-upon conditions" necessary so it could assume full security responsibilities.

Necessary arrangements for the security transfer of Muthanna province, which is in southern Iraq, are nearly complete, Cichowski said.

"The prime minister has stated that it will happen," the general said.

"The last final details are being worked out."

Coalition forces will continue to assist the Iraqi government in achieving the mutual goal of a free and self-reliant Iraq, he said.

IPs get 800 new police cars

Story and photo courtesy of British MOD

BASRA — A fleet of more than 800 new police cars were handed over to the Iraqi Police at a ceremony at Shaibah Logistic Base in southern Iraq recently.

The cars are part of an ongoing program to equip the Iraqi Security Forces.

The British Osiris fund, set up by the British Government, paid for the vehicles to help the IPs patrol more effectively. The car keys were given by Maj. Gen. John Cooper, commanding general of Multi-National Division - Southeast, to police chiefs from three southeastern provinces; Dhi Qar, Maysan and Basra.

The Iraqi Army received new armored personnel carriers at the end of May. Those vehicles are already in service on the streets of Basra.



British Maj. Gen. John Cooper, left, hands over a set of car keys to an Iraqi provincial police chief.



Hero of the Week

Man helps disabled Iraqi children

Story and photo courtesy of
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL — A civilian contractor in Mosul is providing wheelchairs to disabled Iraqi children.

Brad Blauser, a Dallas native and civilian employee with Logistical Services Incorporated at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, has made it his personal mission for handicapped Iraqi children to get the wheelchairs they need.

"There is an alarming rate of children in Iraq that suffer from birth defects, disease or casualties of war," Blauser said.

He wanted to make sure that children are not restricted to their homes because they don't have any way to get outside and play with their friends.

He has been involved with activities at the base chapel where he met Maj. David Brown, a surgeon from the 24th Infantry Regiment.

Blauser asked Brown what he could do to help.

"Brown told me that many Iraqi children needed wheelchairs," Blauser said.

Blauser sent out an e-mail to more than 300 friends explaining how children were in need of wheelchairs.

He asked for 12 wheelchairs and hoped to get the six he needed.

At a cost of \$1,000 to \$3,000 each, Blauser said he didn't know what to expect.

The response to his request shocked



Brad Blauser, a contractor at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, displays a wheelchair donated from requests he sent to friends in the United States recently.

him.

"I could not believe my eyes at how many we received," said Blauser.

He received 31 pediatric wheelchairs for the children.

According to Blauser, a shipping company sent the first 12 wheelchairs to Iraq at no charge and he was pleasantly surprised when a generous American paid for the remaining chairs to be shipped.

"I was just overwhelmed at the support we received from the people back home," Blauser said.

"Once again, the American people have

showed that they care about children they have never met and it is truly inspirational."

The majority of the wheelchairs have been delivered to local children, but a few were donated to the 47th Combat Support Hospital where some children who can't walk get treatment.

"I am just glad to be here and be able to do my part," Blauser said.

"The American people deserve all the credit ... it was just my idea. They came through like they always do and that makes you proud to be an American."

Orange soup...

U.S. Army Sgt. Kenneth Strong, left, and his fellow Soldiers exit a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during an aerial traffic control point mission near Tal Afar, in northern Iraq, on July 2. The Soldiers are assigned to the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

DoD photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey



Iraqi Army in control of Diyala

Story and photos by Spc. Lee Elder
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KIRKUSH — The Iraqi Army's 5th Division officially took charge of military operations in northern Iraq's Diyala province from Coalition forces during a ceremony on July 3.

The division's colors, a symbolic flag, were unveiled and presented to its commander, Maj. Gen. Ahmed Klepos Awad Majhool al-Kozaaee by British Maj. Gen. Peter Everson, who serves as deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

The Iraqi division earned its colors after being trained and recognized as a viable fighting force by the 101st Airborne Division.

"I'd like to say that this division will be successful because it is composed of the full spectrum of Iraqi people," al-Kozaaee said. "It represents the hand of the government that carries the weapon and the olive branch at the same time."

The Iraqi unit, also known as the "Hadeed" Division, was formed in April 2004 and was fully operational in February 2005.

The division has a headquarters and three brigades.

Al-Kozaaee promised his division would be "the strong hand of the Iraqi people in defeating the insurgency." He pledged to remain with the division as their "brother, teacher and commander."

Everson said the 5th Division was the first Iraqi Army division in the Multi-National Division - North qualified to conduct independent combat operations. It is the fourth division to attain that status.

"Gen. (al-Kozaaee)'s Soldiers have worked hard for the day that this division would be prepared to assume responsibility for this large complex province," Everson said.



Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Ahmed Klepos Awad Majhool al-Kozaaee, left, grasps the Iraqi 5th Division's colors given by British Maj. Gen. Peter Everson, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps - Iraq during a ceremony on June 3.

"And that day has come."

Diyala province spans from the eastern edge of Baghdad to the Iranian border and covers 70,000 square miles. It is home to more than 1.7 million Iraqis.

One of the division's units, the 1st Brigade, was qualified in April, and has maintained security for the eastern part of the province.

The qualification, or 'validation' in military terms, changes the roles of both Iraqi and Coalition forces. The division will now assume full responsibility for the province while Coalition forces will take on a supporting role.

Col. William Gothard, an Army Reserve Soldier with the Richmond, Va.-based 80th Division, commands the Military Transition Team in charge of training the division.

His unit members work and live with their Iraqi Army counterparts and prepared them for the responsibility.

"They conduct combat operations on their own with us providing support where they request it," Gothard said.

He said the walk toward validation has not been an easy one.

In addition to training, the division's Soldiers have seen combat in Diyala and in neighboring Fallajah, Samarra and Baghdad.

Both al-Kozaaee and Everson praised the efforts of Coalition forces to train



Iraqi Soldiers form a pyramid as their nation's flag is hoisted during the 5th Division's Transfer of Authority ceremony.

the division. A moment of silence was observed for both Coalition and Iraqi forces who have lost their lives in combat operations with the division.

"I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to my brothers in the Coalition forces - the 101st Airborne Division; 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and all of our other friends," al-Kozaaee said.

Operation cleans Baghdad streets

Story and photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente
4th Infantry Division

BAGHDAD — Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers, in coordination with local Iraqi governments, continue their efforts in Operation Baghdad is Beautiful, a joint operation aimed at helping to restore and improve Baghdad through the removal of trash, debris and barrier materials.

A recent milestone occurred Wednesday with the completion of a month-long project to clean up the Karada Peninsula.

The Karada Department of Cleaning was primarily responsible for cleaning the main streets of the peninsula, said 1st Lt. Jared Miller, an effects coordinator with the 4th Infantry Division.

The local government was impeded from performing routine cleaning on many secondary streets because of large barriers and debris, he said.

MND-B hired local contractors who removed the unnecessary barriers on both secondary and main streets and disposed of huge piles of accumulated rubbish and debris, Miller said.

"Baghdad is Beautiful helps the population by cleaning the neighborhoods to give them more pride in their community," he said.

A project fund used by American commanders for urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction within their areas of operations helps pay for the projects.

"When other districts see what can be done, they will want to get more involved with similar projects," said Staff Sgt. Sean Dowdy, a civil affairs noncommissioned officer attached to the division.

"If you can demonstrate success in one area, it's easier to convince other areas that the project can be done."



First Lt. Jared Miller greets locals Wednesday during the final stage of cleaning Baghdad's Karada Peninsula, part of the Operation Baghdad is Beautiful.

Photo of the week...



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alfred Johnson

U.S. Soldiers with the 4th Infantry Division fire weapons during a sniper team night-fire exercise on Memorial Range at Contingency Operating Base Speicher on June 29.

Coalition hunts al-Qaida terrorists

Story by Sgt. Tom Conning
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Coalition forces killed an al-Qaida in Iraq terrorist and detained four others during a raid southeast of Samarra on Wednesday. The dead terrorist had provided a safe haven for foreign fighters linked to an attack on an Iraqi forces checkpoint on May 20. He was an associate of Haitham al-Badri, a known al-Qaida leader and foreign fighter facilitator.

Al-Badri helped plan the Feb. 22 bombing of the Al-Askari Mosque in Samarra and the murder that same day of Atwar Bahjat, a popular Iraqi news reporter.

Several suspects fled the targeted building as Coalition forces moved in. Some troops secured the building, while others pursued two fleeing terrorists.

Coalition aircraft fired on the terrorists, killing one. The other was detained by the ground forces. Three others were detained during the raid, including the owner of the house.

Torture tapes found in raid

Second Iraqi National Police Division officers, along with Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad, detained seven suspected terrorists and discovered three weapons caches during a search in Baghdad's Doura neighborhood early Thursday.

Iraqi Police and Coalition Soldiers found sniper rifles, mortar rounds, propaganda, rocket-propelled grenades, and other explosives.

One cache, across the street from a local mosque, contained video tapes depicting torture and mortars being launched along with munitions and improvised explosive device making materials. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team destroyed the munitions.

Car lot was IED factory

On Tuesday, 2nd Division Police and MND-B Soldiers searched Baya'a Car Market in Baghdad and found a vehicle-borne IED factory. Two terrorists were detained at the car lot.



Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey

Army Staff Sgt. Aaron Gaddy, from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, walks to a rally point during an operation in Ayn Mana on June 26. The operation, planned and executed primarily by the Iraqi Army, was to seek out illicit weapons and insurgents.

During the search, the forces discovered a large cache that consisted of various bomb-making materials including explosives, rocket-propelled grenades and mortar rounds.

Vehicle theft thwarted

First Iraqi National Police Division officers foiled an attempt to steal a national police vehicle Tuesday evening in southern Baghdad. Five terrorists exchanged small-arms fire with the police before fleeing.

Citizen tip leads to launchers

MND-B Soldiers recovered three improvised rocket launchers near Jurf Al-Nedaaf Monday after receiving a tip from an Iraqi citizen. One of the launchers had a rocket loaded in the tube and appeared to have been aimed at the 1st Police Division's headquarters. A Coalition EOD recovered and disarmed the rocket.

"While it's not a huge cache, it was an Iraqi citizen that informed us of it. That in itself is a big deal because it shows the Iraqi people don't support the insurgency," said Capt. Ivan Anaya, a MND-B company commander.

Dynamite discovered

Sixth Iraqi Army Division Soldiers found a large weapons cache west of Baghdad Friday. The cache included mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, two bullet-proof vests, assault rifles, hand grenades, sticks of dynamite, sniper rifles, and other munitions.

Hospital secured

On Wednesday, Iraqi security forces, with support from Coalition forces, searched a hospital in northern Ramadi that was being used by insurgents.

One weapons cache was found in the seven-story hospital and surrounding facilities. No hospital services were interrupted by the search, and the hospital is now open to the public.

Iraqi and Coalition forces had received sniper fire from the hospital on multiple occasions, and intelligence indicated the hospital was being used as an insurgent safe haven and command center.

Soldiers from the 7th Iraqi Army

Operations

from previous page

Division conducted the search with support from Marines assigned to the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division.

Iraqi Police will assume hospital security in order to return it to normal operations in support of all of the people of Ramadi," said Lt. Col. Stephen M. Neary, a battalion commander with the 8th Marine Regiment.

Kidnap victims saved

Iraqi 6th Division Soldiers manning traffic control points saved four kidnapping victims on July 3.

In Ameriyah, a vehicle carrying one victim attempted to run through a checkpoint manned by 6th Division Soldiers.

The Iraqi troops opened fire on the terrorist's vehicle. The victim was thrown from the vehicle as the terrorists escaped. The kidnap victim was returned to his home.

Sixth Iraqi Division Soldiers also rescued three Red Crescent employees from terrorists near the Al-Nida Mosque.

The Soldiers stopped a black sedan



Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey

An Iraqi Soldier speaks to a girl while searching a house during an operation to seek out illicit weapons and insurgents in Ayn Mana on June 26.

at a checkpoint

The two kidnappers attempted to flee, but were detained. The kidnap victims were not injured.

Terror facilitator killed

Iraqi Army forces raided a rural farm house southwest of Baghdad on July 3, capturing 14 members of an al-Qaida cell and killing a key terrorist facilitator.

Iraqi counter-terrorist forces conducted the raid in the farming community of Qarabawi.

Iraqi forces seized assault rifles, a machine gun, and several grenades. A VBIED was also destroyed at the scene.

One Iraqi Soldier was killed and another Iraqi Soldier was wounded during the operation.

Operations Review

Heading to work



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Lock

U.S. Soldiers leave Forward Operating Base Marez in Mosul in a Stryker combat vehicle to conduct a patrol on July 1. The Soldiers are from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

Rebuilding Iraq

Projects that are shaping a nation



Maternity hospital renovated

Story by Polli Barnes Keller
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

ARBIL — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has undertaken many projects to help improve children's health care in Iraq.

One of the major projects, the Arbil Maternity and Pediatric Hospital, was recently completed and is expected to improve health care to some 900,000 residents.

The project began in December 2004 and cost \$6.8 million. The hospital, which employs more than 670 Iraqis, needed a complete overhaul. A water treatment facility, a medical waste incinerator and electrical generators were installed. Major repairs were done to the hospital's mechanical, electrical, water and sewer systems. A residence for doctors was added to the hospital and 39 adjoining apartments were modernized.

The Corps of Engineers is also renovating seven other pediatric and maternity hospitals in northern Iraq.

The Coalition is working on the projects with the Iraqi Ministry of Health, which has made lowering the infant mortality rate a top priority over the next five years.



Baghdad province

Sewage

Two sewage pump stations in Mahmoudiya have been rehabilitated. These sewage projects, which cost \$323,000, create a healthier living environment for approximately 16,000 residents.

Electrical

Construction was completed on two electrical distribution networks in Rusafa. One \$533,000 project installed about seven miles of electric line along the Tigris River. The other \$377,000 project dismantled an existing network and installed 2.5 miles of new line. The projects will benefit 40,000 residents.



Basra province



A \$98,000 railroad station renovation in Basra began on June 8 and will be completed in August. The project will install plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems in the existing building and also renovate offices and repair the roof. The project will allow the Iraqi railroad to increase the number of passengers traveling from Basra to Baghdad.

General: 'Significant criminal captured'

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Iraqi forces with Coalition aviation support captured a "significant criminal" in East Baghdad Thursday, Coalition spokesman Army Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV said Friday.

Speaking to reporters by satellite from Baghdad, Caldwell was able to show video of the Iraqi-planned, Iraqi-led and Iraqi-executed operation. Coalition personnel accompanied the operation, but only in an "overwatch" role, Caldwell said. Overwatch means they observed the operation and could have advised Iraqi leaders if needed, the general explained.

Caldwell said the criminal was picked up with four other men. "He led multiple insurgent cells in Baghdad," the general said.

"His main focus is to conduct attacks against Iraqi and Coalition forces. These attacks have included using improvised explosive devices and vehicle(-borne) improvised explosive devices."

The terrorist's group has kidnapped, tortured and murdered Iraqi citizens, and he personally killed two Iraqi Soldiers "in an attempt to improve his organization's status with his higher leadership," Caldwell said.

Iraqi intelligence linked the man to a

punishment committee that carries out vigilante judgment on perceived enemies.

"We know that this individual was also involved in the transfer of weapons from Syria into Iraq to, reportedly, facilitate ... his efforts to splinter away from his current organization," the general said.

The capture was part of Iraq's Operation Together Forward, Caldwell said. There were no Iraqi or Coalition casualties.

Iraqi Soldiers operated from 16 up-armored Humvees and two armored trucks. They based the operation on intelligence, Caldwell said.

Upon reaching the neighborhood, the security forces took intense small-arms and rocket-propelled-grenade fire for 43 minutes, Caldwell said. The Iraqi troops, using night-vision devices, replied to the fire, while continuing their primary mission.

The general said the troops had to blast open the door of one of the target houses. Upon entering, they interrogated the people inside and found the man was in a nearby house. Again, they blasted open the door and captured the man with four other men in the house.

Caldwell said it was "a very well-coordinated, well-executed operation. Iraqi security forces, in fact, planned this operation and then executed it themselves."



On the flight line...



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey

U.S. Army Soldiers from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team walk on the flight line before an aerial traffic control point mission near Tal Afar on July 2.

Coalition 'World Cup' benefits Soldiers, families

Story and photo courtesy of British MOD

BASRA — The England World Cup team thought it was hot in Germany, but a lesser known Basra Air Station competition was fought between 32 military teams in temperatures of more than 110 degrees recently.

The 'USA' team eventually triumphed in the 'Not the World Cup' soccer competition, bringing home the coveted 'Cup' and pizza vouchers.

The competition was organized by personnel from the Royal Air Force's Training Flight in Basra to bring together servicemembers and civilian contractors from different nationalities.

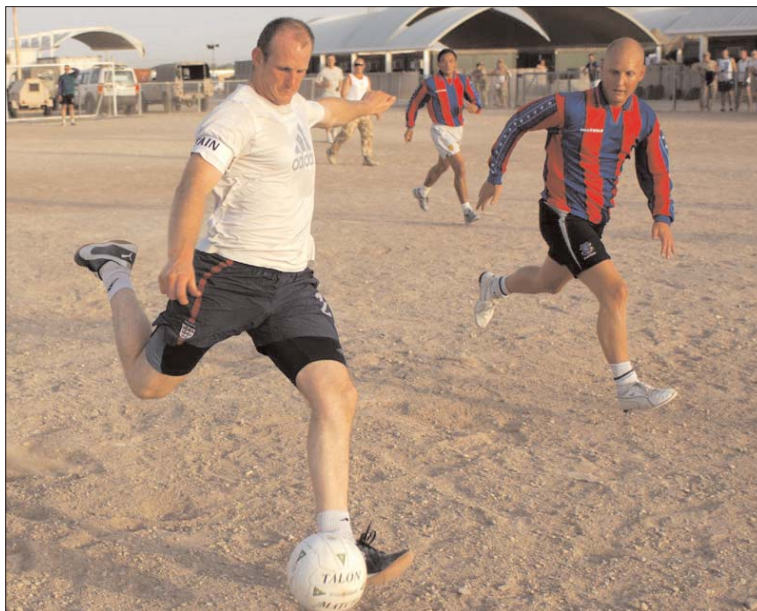
Proceeds from the event went to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Family's Association - a nonprofit group that provides financial assistance to former British servicemembers and their families.

Themed around real World Cup soccer, the 32 teams were randomly given a World Cup country to play for.

The competition was the brainchild of RAF Flight. Lt. Dave Melmouth, training flight commander, and Cpl. John Reed, a physical training instructor.

"The idea was to bring the various sections together, play some competitive sport and raise morale in the lead-up to the World Cup," said Melmouth.

Despite the challenges of busy military



'USA' team captain Christopher Shaw kicks a soccer ball to his teammates at the Basra 'Not the World Cup' soccer tournament at Basra Air Station in southern Iraq. Thirty-two teams competed in the event, raising more than \$450 for charity.

operations in Basra, the teams managed to play all the games and raised more than \$450 for SSAFA.

Two competitions were run side-by-side. The main 'Cup' competition and a secondary 'World Plate' were played to give losing teams another chance to compete.

An on-camp Iraqi shop donated a cup and plate for the winners. The two winning teams also won pizza vouchers.

The 'Plate' final was between 'Germany' (Quartermasters Accommodation) and 'Italy' (Quartermasters Technical).

It was a physical and fast-paced game with 'Germany' hanging on to an early goal

to win, 1 - 0.

The USA team (Headquarters 20 Brigade) fought a long and difficult final against their arch rivals Angola (Joint Helicopter Force - Iraq), but played a waiting game to win 2 - 1 and was crowned the Basra 'Not the World Cup' soccer champions.

"It was a tough job organizing all the games with all of the teams busy with live operations, but all the teams seemed to have a great time," Reed said.

"It was great to see all the different sections and services competing and I enjoyed refereeing ... most of the time."

Iraqi military ethics center opens

Story and photo by
Spc. Rick Rzepka
Staff writer

AR RUSTIMIYAH — The sign in front of a building here says "He who gives wisdom has given a lot of good."

Iraq's Ministry of Defense opened the Center for Military Values, Principles and Leadership on July 3.

Iraq's MOD and the Coalition's Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq are trying to instill the wisdom of morality and ethics into Iraq's armed forces.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Terry A. Wolff, commanding general of the Coalition

Military Assistance Training Team and Iraqi Gen. Babakir Zibari, chief of staff and Iraqi Joint Forces commanding general, cut the red ribbon.

The center will help produce leaders of character and integrity, sustaining a professional ethic that focuses on Iraq, Wolff said.

Retired Iraqi Maj. Gen. Nabil Abdul Kadir, who commands the center, said that Iraqi Soldiers must now act in accordance with a professional standard instead of thinking and behaving according to their desires.

"They will personify the change that is taking place all over Iraq," he said.



U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Terry A. Wolff, left, commanding general of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, and Iraqi Gen. Babakir Zibari, Iraqi Joint Forces commanding general, speak during a ceremony in Ar Rustimiyah on July 3.